

Forms of Madman theory: Sept 13, 1982 (after SS-18) pcc

1. Erratic, impulsive, unpredictable (angry, impulsively violent, macho, with unpredictable attachment to "honor")... (Nixon)
2. Bureaucratic: ~~out of centralized control~~, governed by agency inertias and rivalry and sub-goals; threat may be carried out simply because "the stencils are cut."
low
3. Ideological: cold war demonology, Manicheism; "doctrine" (a al Kissinger, 1957) that nuclear war can be limited; amateur, youthful, inexperienced (in operations, combat) belief in calculations, in the replicability of test results; and in the rationality of opponent, Russians' prudent willingness and ability to back down, especially in the face of ^{our} commitment ("as in Cuba II"!); transcendent importance of staying in office, never being defeated, never losing a single piece of territory, never backing down; in particular, never allowing evil adversary to increase its influence or territory even marginally or to win one.

(Sub-category, or perhaps separate category embracing some of above: silly-clever, as at RAND, (Colin Gray, Luttwak), crackpot realism--ignoring long-run and competitive interaction and victims (Nietze).

All this prepares leaders to make real commitments, in confidence that threats will work and will not have to be carried out; or that, if carried out, results need not be mutually catastrophic.

To extent that any of these forms is deliberately cultivated and presented as an image, for effect on enemy (and domestic audience): Vonnegut principle (Mother Night): You are what you pretend to be, so you should be careful what you pretend to be.

(Erosion of) (safe) margin of error, (sober, unimpassioned) to one CW; non-ame intentio.

Current situation: Hyp.: Reagan is presenting some of all of these, but in particular an Ideological commitment to theories of limited war (Kissinger) and war-fighting, backed up by huge spending. The latter communicates intent and commitment (to ideology, and to threats) mainly by its bulk, but it is also crucial to effectiveness that money is spent on particular items that all contribute, in theory, to effectiveness in limited war, escalation and threats of escalation, and to war-fighting (not just, for instance, on more Poseidon warheads: perfect for deterrence).

a) If they spend that much, they may believe it, or come to believe it;

(b) (less obvious): Their very willingness to spend this despite political costs and controversy, with the latter including well-argued attacks on the reasonableness of the strategy, demonstrates belief and determination on part of Administration, a stability of policy despite criticism (like Nixon's ability to ride out protest over Cambodia).

Thus, the true, private theory of Administration is (or, may be): The Soviets have to worry--when they ~~us~~ spend, now, and what we're spending on, and our willingness and ability to weather criticism; they can't be sure we won't really commit ourselves to use this hardware, or that we won't actually use it, in a confrontation.

And it can work; at cost, if it does not, of proving that we are what we pretend to be: mad managers of massacre.

*like 80
cow "warning"*

2.

As in 1957-61: need to mobilize US public to large expenditures on both strategic and limited war forces, to maintain the escalation and war-fighting (counterforce) superiority needed to maintain credibility of first-use threats in limited-war confrontations in Third World (and in Europe, to bar the door to Soviet counter-threats of pressure there in retaliation for pressure or defeats outside Europe).

The means to do this: lie to public that Soviets are about to achieve war-fighting superiority, or have already done so, and will use it as we used our superiority in the past (though prediction is not put this way!) (though, to one who knows our own secret history, there is a lesson in it that the Soviets might indeed, contrary to their past performance under quite different circumstances, behave in the ways the CPD projects--if they could achieve the type of superiority we had in the past--which is impossible; also, it implies that the Soviets may indeed be trying to "suggest" the possibility that they might behave this way, or be trying to achieve a capability to do so: either (1) to achieve a marginal capability to "behave like the US" in peripheral areas, hopefully with the reluctant acquiescence of the US; or (2) to spur us into ending the arms race (in which case, their pursuit of "bargaining chips, leverage" beyond parity of retaliatory capability, has proved as "counterproductive" as our own). (They may have been genuinely misled by the success of the first stage of the Brezhnev buildup in producing detente and a US willingness to sign SALT I and proceed with SALT). (Even the second stage might have worked, in the absence of the global factors that led to the ascendance of the CPD over detenteists).

Kissinger's position in Brussels and after, while decrying war-fighting and counterforce, simply reiterates his position of 1957 (to which he returned by 1964, after lessening it in 1961), in favor of a "doctrine" and readiness for limited nuclear war (now, perhaps, with emphasis on threats of it rather than on actually fighting it with any confidence); and perhaps--still tacit--with an acceptance of a German, or at least European, nuclear deterrent: rather than "massive retaliation," or Schlesinger's "limited strategic strikes" (where Schlesinger, like Kissinger, decries possibility of an effective, or even credible, (not-incredible) counterforce strategic war-fighting capability. (Schlesinger did come out, against Ford, for a large buildup in defense spending; but what was this for? MX? Or for limited war non-nuclear and mini-nuke capability, for Middle East and Korea? Issue is, what do you back this up with? to control escalation, avoid Soviet threat or practice of matching US escalations or escalating them (thus making the US threat incredible and ineffective, and the implementation of it horribly destructive and risking total escalation). Kissinger: threat of limited nuclear war, perhaps wielded by Europeans; Schlesinger, limited strategic retaliation; CPD/Reagan: threat of all-out war-fighting.

Understand Kissinger's past and present emphasis on "having a doctrine" in terms of its effect on the credibility of threats, its "madman" aspect ("madly doctrinaire, combined with bureaucratic implementation of a given doctrine; with a dash of erraticism and ambiguity at the helm").

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